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SUBJECT: Ambassador addresses latest graduates of USG-funded staff officer training

¶1. The Ambassador, speaking at graduation ceremonies for the 36 graduates of the U.S.-funded Battalion Staff Officer Training Course March 3 in Kinshasa, cited the program as further evidence of the good state of U.S.-Congolese relations and encouraged graduates to see their role as protecting the Congolese people. The 36 officers, ranging from lieutenant colonel to captain in rank, completed a seven-week course in the U.S. method of military decision-making and battlefield operating systems, as well as human rights and code of conduct issues.

¶2. Deputy Defense Minister Luc Amuri, who presided at the ceremony, expressed thanks to the United States for assisting in the modernization of the Congolese military. This is the eighth time the U.S. has funded the course, which is taught by American military instructors. DCM Brock addressed the previous graduation ceremony November 30.

¶3. MONUC Radio Okapi and the pro-government daily L'Observateur highlighted the Ambassador's remarks in their reports of the event.

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